

Claims

1. A piece of luggage comprising:
 - a first frame having a perimeter and an open side;
 - a second frame having a perimeter and an open side;
 - a strip of flexible material attached to the perimeters of both of said frames around said open sides such that said first frame and said second frame enclose a volume which can be increased by moving said second frame away from said first frame and unfolding said strip of flexible material; and
 - an expansion mechanism, said mechanism including
 - a front protective plate attached to said first frame;
 - an expansion plate attached to said second frame; and
 - a lifting mechanism allowing said front protection plate to be moved relative to said expansion plate from a collapsed position to an extended position;

wherein, when said front protective plate is moved relative to said expansion plate from said collapsed position to said extended position, said second frame is moved away from said first frame unfolding said strip of material and increasing said volume; and

wherein, at a point between said extended position and said collapsed position, said expansion plate is not in contact with said front protective plate.
2. The luggage of claim 1 wherein said expansion plate and said front protective plate are resiliently supported in said extended position, such that if a force is applied to said expansion plate in a direction to return said expansion plate and said front protective plate to said collapsed position, said expansion plate will move to said collapsed position without damage to said expansion mechanism.

3. The luggage of claim 1 wherein said expansion plate is trapezoidal in shape.
4. The luggage of claim 1 wherein at said extended position, said expansion plate is pinched by a portion of said front protective plate.
5. The luggage of claim 4 wherein said pinching comprises stoppering by said expansion plate.
6. The luggage of claim 1 further comprising a second expansion mechanism attached to an opposing side of said luggage.
7. The luggage of claim 1 wherein in said extended position, said expansion plate is in contact with tabs on said front protective plate.
8. The luggage of claim 7 wherein said tabs are in contact with a surface of a cut-out in said expansion plate.
9. The luggage of claim 1 wherein said lifting mechanism comprises a handle for sliding a pushing pin in a slot.
10. The luggage of claim 1 wherein said lifting mechanism rotates about an axis fixed relative to said front protective plate.
11. A luggage expansion mechanism comprising:
 - a front protective plate;
 - an expansion plate which can move relative to said front protective plate from a collapsed position to an extended position and back again; and
 - a lifting mechanism, arranged so that movement of said lifting mechanism causes said expansion plate to move relative to said front protective plate;
 - wherein, said expansion plate is resiliently detained in said extended position by said lifting mechanism in a manner such that if a force is applied directly to said front protective plate

and said expansion plate when in said extended position to move to said collapsed position, said expansion plate and said front protective plate can so move without damage to said luggage expansion mechanism.